

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman (R-VA), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, today released the following prepared remarks for the subcommittee's hearing on professional military education (PME):

[The video of Rep. Wittman's opening statement is available at [this link](#) .]

"Thank you, Chairman Snyder, and good morning to our witnesses-we appreciate your being here today, especially Admiral Wisecup who is making his second appearance this month.

"Today's hearing focuses on the first level of joint professional officer education, which comes after an officer is well grounded in his or her service, selected for field grade rank, and is ready for broader responsibilities. More importantly, completion of the intermediate level of education or JPME I, is expected of all majors and lieutenant commanders. Therefore, unlike the war colleges, these schools are the only schools which educate all officers attaining the rank of O-4, and are thus an important touchstone of the joint professional education system.

"While concentrating on operational matters of their respective services, the schools provide an important, early joint education through more than the subjects taught. The use of other service faculty and attendance by other service, international, and interagency students in these seminar based courses provide a broadening perspective. The witnesses will understand then, our interest in questions of faculty quality and diversity of experience, and the ability of the services to support each other with excellent faculty and students. Without a solid mix of other service and agency faculty and students, none of your institutions can provide a credible joint education. I would appreciate hearing both your success stories and your obstacles in attaining these goals as you testify today.

"Our preliminary research indicates that the Army and Navy programs are in transitional periods. In fact, it seems the Army may believe it over reached in its stated goal of sending all majors to in residence intermediate education at Fort Leavenworth, and may scale back these plans. It would be useful to have on the record the reasons the Army determined to educate all majors in residence and the difficulties it has faced in reaching this goal.

"I am less concerned with service differences in school organization and placement in the service bureaucracy. What's important is getting the right people, both faculty and students, and funding to do the job.

"Mr. Chairman, since I'd like to hear from our witnesses and I'm mindful that our National Defense Authorization bill is being debated on the floor of the House today, I will stop here."